

Carnie Littlefield On Embellishing Allure



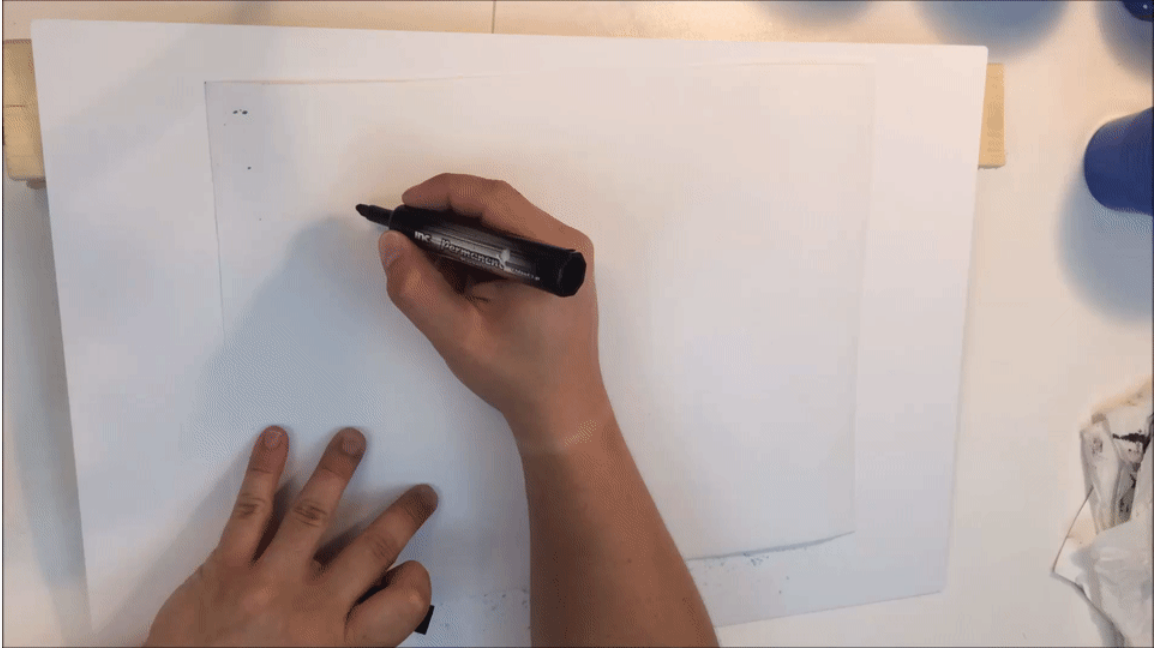
Mixed media artist Carnie Littlefield shares his experience on embellishing his prints with Breathing Color’s Allure Photo Panels.

“Embellishing” is only a recent term to me, I’m one of the few artists lucky enough to work here and get to work on this media from day one.

I grew up with a pencil in one hand, and doodles coming out my ears, but only in the last three years having worked for Breathing Color has my art truly grown.

Urged by my family and friends, I’ve now fully accepted that I’m an artist and I’m loving every minute of it.

My name is R. Carnie Littlefield and we’re about to show you the “magic of metal.”



In this demo, I'm going to show you how to “embellish” (fancy word for painting add-ons) your fine art media prints.

The most amazing thing about [Breathing Color's Allure Aqueous Metal](#) is that you can make truly unique collector's edition prints.

You can start from one printed matte image, and the Allure Aqueous metal takes acrylic, ink, or watercolor wash embellishments perfectly.

As an artist, the biggest benefits I can see are: fast-drying paints, color accuracy, and of course no “give” to your substrate (after all, it's metal!).

If you've ever loaded up a canvas print with tons of acrylic body, you know the pains of a sagging or “buckling” print. Not so with BC's Allure Aqueous Metal.

So let's get started.

SETTING UP YOUR WORKSTATION FOR EMBELLISHING ON ALLURE

Here's the starting image, my “Night Hunter” owl piece – printed on [Breathing Color's Allure Aqueous Matte Metal](#). See how vibrant those colors are?

This was direct-printed too, no transfer paper or heat press to bother with. Just print and start painting on your print (after out-gassing of course).



Every artist has a different preferred setup, but I should point out some useful tools that you should have when setting up your workstation with Allure Aqueous Metal:

- **Drop cloths / liner paper / scrap canvas** – Metal is not an absorbent material so you need to plan for run-off acrylic paint and quick clean up.
- **Water cups** – I find acrylics, watercolors, or gauche work best on this metal. Set out several little water cups to quickly rinse your brushes and keep your colors from getting muddy.
- **Porcelain ink wells** – These are the easiest to clean up. Add hot water and you're back on track. This is great for working with metal since you'll likely be using multiple colors at one time.
- **Pallet knife or sharp exacto tip** – Particulates love metal, it seems to naturally attract dust and dog hairs and all sorts of particulates. I find a sharp exacto knife tip is excellent for quick pick up jobs.
- **Acrylic additive or slow-dri gel additive** – Allure Aqueous Metal is so successful at accepting printed ink that paints stick and dry almost immediately. If you're wanting to paint with a more "oil paint" feel, add some slow-dri gel to your acrylics.
- **Latex gloves (never cotton)** – Believe it or not, the inkjet receptive coating on Allure is so good that it can pick up your finger prints, oils from your hands, or any dust or grime. Take care to use latex gloves when handling or moving.

EMBELLISHING ALLURE PHOTO PANELS

So now that you're all set with your workspace, let's get started!

Embellishing an [Allure Aqueous Metal](#) print is just like embellishing any other print; feel free to load up acrylic, add water splashes, use markers, colored pencils, or even get some hot glue and make a mixed media scrapbook style piece!

The possibilities are endless. You can see from the GIFs below that the print doesn't smear, chip, or run color with my added acrylics.

“Night Hunter” Owl – Collector’s Edition 1/21



One of my signature pieces is the focus of this article and I'm painting it with two totally different styles so you can see that Allure Aqueous Metal is truly a unique and customizable product for your specific client or niche artist print reproductions.

I've made “Night Hunter” into a collector's edition piece. I'm only going to print 21 of these and each will be painted differently.



Here we see the final result of the “Old Timey Gentleman Owl!” with a very heavy acrylic border, gold flake, red, orange, green, and white acrylic paint additions to the image.

You can see from the GIF above that I was able to load up acrylics and quickly paint without hurting or smearing the under-print. How amazing is that?

With Allure Aqueous, you can do any number of embellishments with great results, of course, I’ve not tested every paint brand or style.

“Night Hunter” Owl – Collector’s Edition 2/21



With “Edition 2/21”, I’m taking a totally different approach and adding swirls and bold primary colors, with no worry that the [Allure Aqueous Metal](#) will color fade over time.

Take note that I was able to **drastically** change the look of this very same print just with different colored paint! Is this even the same print? Your clients may never know.

Bonus Feature: With this method I used a lot of water and still couldn’t smear the underprint – you shouldn’t have to worry that your Allure Aqueous Metal print will smear, run, or get ruined when embellishing. Just have fun with it!



And here's the final results of "Night Hunter" Owl – Collector's Edition 2/21.

Notice that the Allure white is still nice and clear, no smears or smudges of my inks, and curing time was less than a few hours.

And I can now officially call this a "Embellished Original."

The High Perceived Value of Embellished Metal Prints



But wait, we're not done yet. You need to sell those amazing embellished prints, right? Well, consider what people call **Perceived Value** of your prints and originals.

Sure, you may have taken 10,000 hours to make something, but if no one else sees those late night hours or early mornings of you bent over your piece, sweating out every little detail – how can they value your work like you do?

With Allure Aqueous Metal, the **Perceived Value** is incredible.

Not only can you tell your clients you can “Print directly on metal” but then they can take those prints and make them truly custom originals, just like you saw here.

I could now take these two images and sell them to *completely different clientele* simply because I could add that “extra special touch” by hand.

That's the power of embellished artistic prints. That's the power of [Allure Aqueous Metal](#).

And you're now probably asking “But how do I make them want to buy it?” And I'll tell you: **signed artistic originals**.

SIGNING THE PRINTS



I'm sure you've been to an art fair, art show, craft show or really any show where people have stalls upon stalls of their goods and creations.

Imagine walking up and down those aisles to see people selling their prints, the same images in tons of different size, but the same. All the same.

Now imagine walking into this booth, and seeing not only two completely different versions of the same image, but **signed and sealed** by the artist him or herself.

Here you can see I'm signing with actual gilding for that final special touch. I can guarantee that no two of these "Night Hunter" owls 21 Collector's Editions will be the same!



Sign your prints and let people know you're proud of your work! If you didn't before, do it now.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

In short, every artist has his or her preferred method of embellishing and I'm sure they'll be pleasantly surprised by the Allure Aqueous Metal. I know I'm sold for life.

You may ask "But why is it so good?" and my answer is simply Breathing Color's patented "IRC – Inkjet Receptive Coating".

Simple sheets of metal, or even off-the-shelf gesso won't achieve the smoothness of an Allure Metal sheet, or the matte texture that allows you to embellish prints with pigmented acrylic paints.

You just can't compare a paint-ready product like this Allure Aqueous Metal to a DIY craft material.

[Try a sample pack today](#) if you don't believe me.

→ [Click here to shop Allure and start creating metal embellishments today!](#)



R. Carnie Littlefield is a mixed media artist. He focuses on animals and nature, and all things geeky. He runs an art shop called "[MindcaveCreations](#)" on Etsy and is a 'master of the timelapse' videos on Instagram: [@DesignNinja2015](#).